



**United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Ridgecrest Field Office  
300 South Richmond Road  
Ridgecrest, CA 93555-4436



**CLOSURE ORDER**

**Notice is hereby given that effective March 29, 2002, BLM Routes R5, R50, R40, R15, R25, R35, R 37, R12, and R 48, and all other unauthorized routes and trails, in the Western Rand Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) are closed to all motorized vehicle use. No person may use, drive, transport, park, let stand, or have charge or control over any motorized vehicle in the area located within the closure signs.**

**This closure order is issued to provide for the protection of the desert tortoise and desert tortoise critical habitat within the Western Rand Mountains ACEC. This interim closure was made necessary by the high incidence of noncompliance exhibited by visitors willfully operating off highway vehicles on closed routes and traveling cross country within the ACEC. Recent surveys show that over 90% of the closed routes in the ACEC are being ridden regularly. Visitor compliance with the designated route system is essential to protect the desert tortoise, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The ACEC will remain open for all other non-motorized uses currently allowed under 43 CFR.**

**The authority for this closure is found in 43 CFR Subparts 8341.2 (Special rules) and 8364.1 (Closure and restriction orders). Any person who violates this closure order may be subject to a fine, not to exceed \$1,000 and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.**

**Exemptions to this closure include vehicles conducting official government business which shall be allowed on closed routes and areas as authorized. Official government business may include public service emergencies, resource monitoring/research, and management activities, and other actions authorized by BLM's Ridgecrest Field Office Manager.**

**The closure will remain in effect until rescinded by the Ridgecrest Field Office Manager.**

**Hector A. Villalobos  
Ridgecrest Field Office Manager  
March 29, 2002**